1/25/75

Dear Mrs. Pomerance,

Thanks you for phoning earlier today. I am sorry that there just are no pat answers to seemingly reasonable questions.

You asked, for example, why can't those of us who are working cooperate better. I really think this was more of a protest or complaint that we don't rather than an inquiry. From what I am certain you have heard of me you should understand that it is not easy for me to work with those who say these things. Were their beliefs true it still would not be easy. Because they believe what they say it also is not easy. But the truth is that I do work with those who do hold and have not been reluctant to express behind my back the nastiest beliefs and suspicions about me.

One of the problems is that there are too many who never stop picking up hot irons. One would think that long experience would persuade grown people not to tell themselves that the iron is always cold.

Another is personalities. Egos. Ambitions to be and do something and to be recognized for it, whether or not there is success or achievment or it is earned. The spread between talk and accomplishment, even ability, is as great as I indicated. Most of those who at one time or another have been in this work were unsuited by temperament or experience or they followed wrong approaches and methods or they sought ends that could not be attained.

It is human enough to blame failures on others and to explain deficiencies away by making villains of others. We do not like to tell ourselves that we messed up. It is always easier to explain the unwelcome to ourselves in terms of another's alleged fault.

The reality is that on all the political assassinations combined the number of people who have done what can reasonably be described as serious work is frighteningly small. I distibguish between work and big talk.

Others too often have no way of making the distinction. Especially because so many of the loud ones are as persuasive as they are sincere. To be able to know what even can be true requires an enormous amount of work by those prepared to comprehend. The evidence is not always simple. Some of it requires acquiring special knowledge. An example of this is much of the talk about where shots came from in the JFK case. There are limitations imposed by what is known beyond question, whether those who are so loud have taken the time or have the capability of learning.

Those who do nothing but talk, like the AIB people, do not have to know and don't care whether or not they do know. It is sufficient for them that they tell themselves that they serve a worhtwhile purpose. Thereafter fact and truth are irrelevant. I have nothing in common with these people and this approach.

There are also the bright people who have done well in other work. They bring to this their fine intelligences and their self-confidence based solidly in other areas and then proceed to make and retail presumptions that in this field are worse than silly. Some awful stuff has achieved wide-spread acceptance only because those spreading it have earned respect with and from other work. In Geoffrey Saxe's poem those were Six Wise Men of Hindustan. But all were blind as well as wise and the elephant's tail was not a snake or its leg a tree-trunk.

Another problem is lack of ordinary principle. People who give their word and neither keep nor intend to keep it. It is impossible to work on a basis of trust with these people. It become more impossible when they are driven to self-justification because they cannot face what they do.

Some really are self-seekers for whom mere attention represents personal gain. Others are not rational on this subject.

My decision to isolate myself from almost everyone was not easy for me because it is contrary to my nature and my belief, that people must work together. Painful experiences all of which hurt the common interest and cruel realities gave me no real alternative. When I have met some obligations I still carry I will detach myself more. I will then have less time wasted, less emotional turmoil, and I may be able to do more work. I want to.

A considerable amount of my time has been spent in what is waste because it was spent in cleaning up after so many others. Had they not made the mess there would have been no cleaning to do. Most of all I have in mind several who have been among the biggest talkers. This was the need when I did my second book. I had to lay other work aside for that and other work made necessary by bad work by others. My second book was to have been a political work, providing a context for the JFK assassination. Not crap like Executive Action, either. (It has its roots in a Department of Disinformation job on which I have extensive files. Of all the slop on which Garrison spun his wheels that was the worst, the slickest and the most costly. Turner is directly responsible for it.)

Now I can't forget all these things of which others have no knowledge just to erect a meaningless- nay a dangerous facade of harmony. Harmony with disasters?

There are other reasons. My purpose is to try to amplify and explain some of what I said because I do not believe it is easily understood by those who have been faced with the need to cope with such people and their acts and to have had to do what could be done to reduce harm or, in some cases, prevent it.

When there are so many who have done what they should not have and they are all vocal, enough of what is said about me gets back to me. Were I to pay attention to it I'd get even less work done. While I'm like anyone else in prefering to be well thought of, for years I have not really cared. Like Abe Lincoln said about the angels swearing. Perhaps if I saw something of real value that came from all that noise I might think otherwise. However, I realize that it has impact on others. There still is nothing I can safely do about it. To brawl in public would be worse, answering accomplishes nothing in most cases anyway. People are not influence by fact and usually don't know what the fact really is. They are influenced by the more subjective. And repetition.

I do not go around talking about these people. I try to do work. But over the years I have had experience with all of them, have accumulated files and have had the actuality of undoing the harm they did. Anyone who has a legitimate interest and does not have the intent of using these files can examine them. Too often it is the writing of the people involved, their letters and memo with which Garrison was incredible generous. With Turner and Boxley these files remain from the work I did undoing a monstrous design they had talked Garrison into, an indictment without basis and in which a dead man would have been alleged to have been a live assassin.

Believe me or not, see the proofs or not, it will not make any difference to me personally either way. But I would like to diminish these hurts, these insanities that ought not get past a bad night's sleep. They leave no credibility for anyone. The flashing in the Congress of some of the utterings of the Cambridge ripoff artists will enable the federal spooks to chill anything that might ever get started. The unsolicited clippings I have are more than enough for such uses. They taint us all. And the subject. And they make an impossible situation for politicians who have to face and electorate and a prejudiced press.

After our conversation ended I did recall that Jim once told me that you were helping. That was very worhtwhile. And he has done remarkably well under the worst of corcumstances.

Sincerely,